

Keeping 'Em Rolling

Managing Pohakuloa

Rebuilding Iraq

The Official U.S. Army Magazine

November 2006
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Soldiers



Expanding Fort Lewis



Cover Story — Page 12
Army ROTC cadets and active-duty Soldiers attack the litter obstacle course at Fort Lewis, Wash.
— Photo by Jason Kaye

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MANAGING Army facilities worldwide is a big job that's ably done by the Installation Management Command. For an in-depth look at the organization and its operations, check out the article beginning on page 8. Then, turn to page 12 to zero in on how one of the Army's larger posts is growing to better serve Soldiers and families in "Expanding Fort Lewis." And, finally, see how things are done in Hawaii by reading "Managing Pohakuloa," which opens on page 16.

Each year thousands of Soldiers and civilians gather at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., for a grueling long-distance march to honor the American and Filipino service members who died during the infamous World War II Bataan



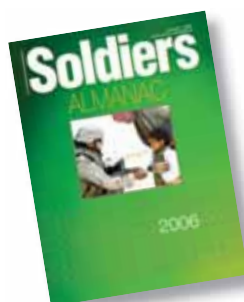
Death March. For event coverage and competitors' tips, turn to page 20.

This month we also offer stories on top high school football players who gather for the Army All-American Bowl, how the Corps

of Engineers is helping rebuild Iraq, how Italy-based Soldiers are vying for German army skill badges, and how constant development and testing help improve field meals.

And, finally, we here at **Soldiers** wish you all a happy and joyous Thanksgiving.

Steve Harding
Steve Harding
Managing Editor



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Reserve-Component Issue

THE August reserve-component issue was a great overview of how much our Guard and Reserve Soldiers do for the Army and the nation. I especially liked the article "Defending the Homeland," because it pointed out the many ways that Guard Soldiers and Airmen help protect the nation's borders — something most Americans don't know about.

Thanks for a great issue. Keep up the good work.

Albert R. Lincoln
via e-mail

AS a career Border Patrol officer I don't often see Soldiers magazine, but a young National Guard Soldier who's working with us showed me your August issue. It was very well done, and I especially liked the article "The Guard on the Border."

The honest truth is that having Guard Soldiers working with us has been a real success story. It's no secret that the Border Patrol has been stretched real thin over the past few years, and being able to call on the Guard for people and equipment has really helped us deal with the waves of illegal immigrants pouring across the border.

Thanks to all the Soldiers who've volunteered their time to help us secure the nation's borders.

Name withheld by request
via e-mail

USARSO Focus

THANKS for the September articles on U.S. Army, South. With the Army, and the nation, focused on Iraq and Afghanistan, it's nice to see coverage of an area that remains especially important to the United States.

Thanks for the effort. And is there any chance we'll see more USARSO-oriented coverage in future issues?

SFC José Garcia
via e-mail

THANKS for the kind words. We here at SOLDIERS try to cover every region

in which there is an Army presence — whether active duty, Guard or Reserve — and we agree that operations in Central and South America don't get the coverage they deserve. We will do our best to continue to provide stories on this important region.

Army Bull Riders?

OKAY, I'm confused. With the Army at war in both Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as continuing to confront terror worldwide, the Army has decided it's important to support bull riders?

I get that having the Army logo on race cars or athletes is good for recruiting, but I sure hope that in an era of tight budgets — when we need to be spending every penny to support our troops in combat — that we're not actually putting money into this kind of thing.

Anthony Bland
via e-mail

Rescue Engineers

THE September article "MDW's Rescue Engineers" was great. I never realized the Army had a specialized technical-rescue unit, and it was an interesting read.

I also want to complement Don Wagner on his photos — they put me right up there on the high line with the Soldier. Great work!

SGT Rod Legard
via e-mail

Cheers for the USO

I READ with interest SSG Julie Nicolov's September article on the continuing work of the USO.

Over the course of my 30-year military career I was lucky enough to see several USO shows, always in places where we never expected to see celebrities. Having those people come out to the middle of nowhere to entertain us was always a great feeling, and I know we all appreciated it.

Thanks for all the wonderful memories!

Col. John Ashe, USMC (Ret.)
via e-mail

Pentagon Memorial

ANDRICKA Hammonds' September article on the effort to construct a memorial to those who died in the September 2001 terrorist attack on the Pentagon was very moving.

Reading about those who lost loved ones in the attack was a firm reminder that we are at war, and that many of those who planned the 9/11 attacks haven't been brought to justice yet.

While I can't say that the proposed design really knocks me out, it's nice to see that a memorial is finally being built.

Linda Jagger
via e-mail

I REALLY enjoyed the September piece about the Pentagon Memorial to the victims of the 9/11 attacks. I think the design is innovative, and I hope it will draw visitors in and help them remember those lost on that terrible day.

Thanks for the story, and I hope we never forget the victims of 9/11, or the family members and loved ones they left behind.

MSG George Steffens (Ret.)
via e-mail

Soldiers values your opinion

To comment, keep your remarks to under 150 words, include your name, rank and address and send them to:

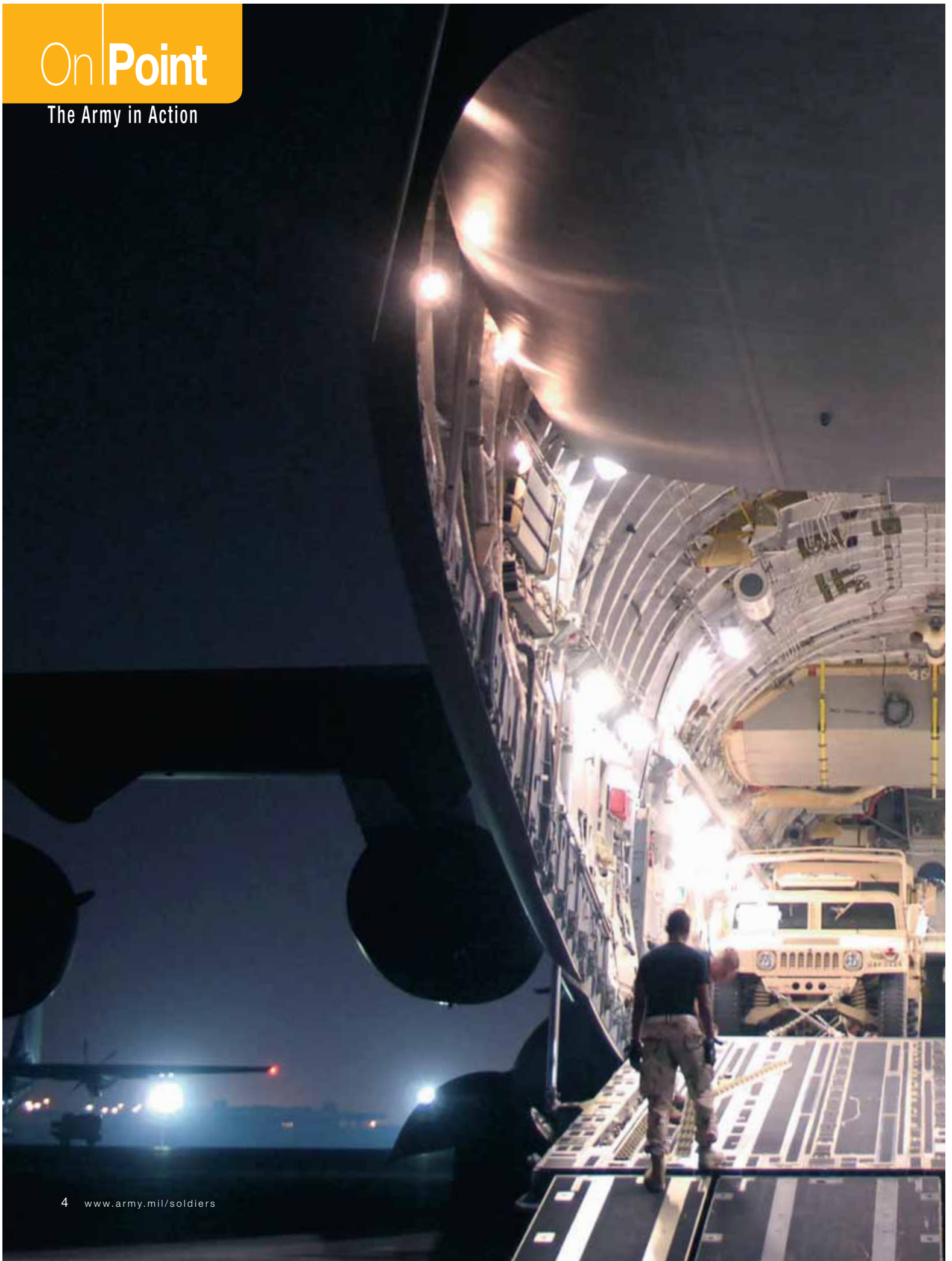
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OnPoint

The Army in Action





Southwest Asia

U.S. Airmen load Army Humvees into a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft in Southwest Asia for transport to Bagram, Afghanistan.

— Photo by SrA Brian Ferguson, USAF

► Iraq

A Soldier from the 101st Airborne Division's 4th Brigade, 506th Regimental Combat Team, posts a warning notice to insurgents in an area east of Baghdad.

— Photo by PH1 Keith W. DeVinney, USN



▲ Afghanistan

A Soldier from the 710th Combat Support Hospital looks into the ear of a patient during a medical civil-action project being conducted at a school in Khowst province.

— Photo by CPL Thomas Childs

► Iraq

An Iraqi boy walks beside SPC Andrew Ruhlman of the 2nd Battalion, 37th Armored Regt., as he conducts a presence patrol in Tall Afar.

— Photo by SSgt. Jacob N. Bailey, USAF





▲ Washington State

PFC Luke Schneider, one of the 550 Soldiers assigned to Task Force Blaze, uses a Pulaski tool to hunt for smoldering embers. The active-duty Army task force deployed from Fort Lewis, Wash., to help civilian firefighters battle wildland fires that scorched more than 128,000 acres.

— Photo by SPC Abel Trevino

◀ Kenya

SSG Jay Antenocruz of the Guam Army National Guard takes up a firing position with a Kenyan army soldier during the joint exercise Natural Fire.

— Photo by MC2 Roger S. Duncan, USN

Introducing

Installation Management Command

Story by Ned Christensen



MUCH attention was focused on the Installation Management Agency — newly named the Installation Management Command in August — as the Army in 2006 struggled to find enough base-operations money to provide the post services Soldiers and families have come to expect.

IMCOM attends to many tasks on Army installations worldwide — from mowing parade fields and the lawns around office buildings to opening swimming pools at the beginning of summer and closing them again in fall.

In 2006 the grass at some installations across the Army got long and some post swimming pools didn't open, but Army leaders agree that the results of funding cutbacks could have

been worse had the then-IMA not closely managed its allocated funds.

When the Army gave IMA full command authority, it validated the organization's role in managing installations. IMCOM encompasses the former IMA, as well as Army Community and Family Support Center, and Army Environmental Center, and is headed by the Army's assistant chief of staff for installation management, who reports to the secretary of the Army on installation issues.

"This new command is the logical next step in the evolution of the IMA," Wilson said. "This major organizational change will create a far more effective, efficient and agile organization to ensure that the world's best Army is supported on the world's best installations."

IMA was conceived in 2001, largely as a result of the war on terror.

Ned Christensen is the chief of public affairs at the Arlington, Va.-based Installation Management Command.



The concept of centralizing installation management began in October 2002, after years of discussion and debate about such an organization.

IMA headquarters was established in Crystal City, Va., and installations fell under seven regions — four in the continental United States and three overseas.

Army officials opted for central-

▲ New barracks — such as this complex at Fort Lewis, Wash. — are one result of the Army's focus on centralized installation management.

◀ Installations have always been “owned” by local commanders, who requested funds for things they considered to be priorities — such as refurbishment of on-post structures.

ized installation management as a way to transform installations into “flagships of readiness” that could support a transformed, expeditionary Army, but the IMA concept was also intended to help solve problems as old as the Army itself.

Installations have always been “owned” by local commanders, who requested funds for particular base operations according to their own priorities. Funding levels and installation standards fluctuated widely, leading to wide-range funding discrepancies

among installations.

Base operations was invariably underfunded, as commanders funded mission readiness before facilities and services.

When an installation needed additional funding, the local commander usually had back-up mission funding to divert to whatever installation issue might unexpectedly arise. With this approach to funding, a gross lack of funds in any given fiscal year could be avoided, but funding was always unpredictable. And the Army's leaders never had a clear understanding of how much money was needed to run an installation.

IMA was created to make installation life more predictable, by establishing standards and determining accurate costs for installation services — everything from child care to grounds maintenance to training

“This new command is the logical next step in the evolution of the IMA,” said LTG Robert Wilson.

IMCOM will shrink to two regions in the United States and consolidate most of the command at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

facilities, housing and deployment of Soldiers from 116 installations worldwide.

“We’re changing the Army,” said BG John A. Macdonald, formerly the director of IMA and now IMCOM’s deputy commanding general. “We’re intensively involved with force generation, training, deployment, Army transformation, base realignment and closure, and improving the quality of life for Soldiers and their families.”

IMCOM will continue to build on IMA’s successes, some of which include:

- Implementing the Contract Security Guard program in 2002, which replaced military police with civilian guards at 20 installations in the continental United States, freeing 4,000 Soldiers from gate-guard duties.
- The same year, IMA morale, welfare and recreation offices purchased and delivered \$13.5 million worth of recreational equipment for deployed Soldiers and civilians.
- In 2003 the organization mobi-

► IMCOM also overseas environmental issues — such as the reuse of materials taken from demolished structures — through the Army Environmental Center.

lized, trained, validated, deployed and billeted more than 149,000 reserve-component Soldiers in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

- In 2004 350,000 Soldiers mobilized and demobilized through IMA installations in support of the war on terror — twice as many as were mobilized and demobilized through U.S. Army, Europe, in May 1945.

- Last year IMA implemented the \$252 million Barracks Improvement Program to improve living conditions for nearly 40,000 Soldiers in 339 sub-standard barracks.

- This year training barracks are getting the same treatment, and when the work is done it will improve the



quality of life for some 86,000 trainees.

- Despite the base-operations funding shortage, IMA spent more on facilities maintenance and restoration over the past three years than has been spent over the past 10 years.

While a few Soldiers remain in IMA — most notably garrison commanders, command sergeants major





▲ IMCOM helps ensure better training for Soldiers by supporting the facilities that posts use for that training. IMCOM civilians also operate ranges.

► In 2005 the Barracks Improvement Program brought better living conditions to nearly 40,000 Soldiers.

and chaplains, most of the organization is composed of civilians who work for Soldiers.

Civilian logisticians operate railheads and central-issue facilities; civilian carpenters, painters and ventilation specialists repair and refurbish barracks; civilian personnel specialists maintain personnel records and issue identification cards. IMA civilians also operate ranges, develop training plans, maintain environmental standards, and enforce security measures.

In the next few years IMCOM will shrink to two regions in the United States and consolidate most of the command at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, in accordance with base realignment and closure requirements. The West region will locate with the headquarters at Fort Sam Houston, while the East region will reside at Fort Eustis, Va. The overseas regions will remain unchanged for the foreseeable future.

◀ Crews work on a 10-acre expansion of the apron at Fort Lewis' Gray Army Airfield. The work provided additional space for the new aviation units now assigned to the installation.



IMA was created to innovate, and IMCOM will take that effort to the next level to find new and better ways to do business, officials said. Never was innovation needed more than now, because the prospects of getting more funding for installations are slim. At the same time, the top quality, all-volunteer force needs to be sustained.

IMCOM's most pressing commitment to Soldiers and senior commanders is to focus its efforts on providing the right set of critical services and either divesting other services, or partnering with local communities to buy or share services.

The coming years will see con-

siderable change, but Soldiers and families should know that IMCOM decision makers won't be working in isolation. IMCOM will not close any facilities or stop providing services without listening to the recommendations and concerns of post residents, senior commanders and others.

"We are committed to ensuring that the critical programs and services on which our Soldiers and families rely will continue, seamlessly, throughout this transition period," Wilson said. ☐



Expanding Fort Lewis

Story by Don Kramer, Jim Symmonds, Joseph Piek and Jason Kaye

THOUSANDS of Soldiers on their way to Fort Lewis, Wash., aren't coming to the Northwest outpost for the views — the towering evergreens, landscapes kept lush by the damp Pacific-Ocean breezes, and majestic Mount Rainier dominating the skyline.

The Soldiers are part of a migration of units that will dramatically increase the installation's ability to project American combat power around the world.

The Army's continuing transformation and repositioning of forces are expected to boost Fort Lewis' population by more than 10,000 Soldiers and 15,000 family members.

Managing that growth — while maintaining standards of living for the post community, preserving the natural resources and environment of the area, and providing a world-class training facility for local units — is more than a minor challenge for officials of the newly formed Installation Management Command. Doing it during wartime is even harder.

Don Kramer, Jim Symmonds, Joseph Piek and Jason Kaye work for the Fort Lewis Public Affairs Office. Brendalyn Carpenter of the Fort Lewis Directorate of Public Works contributed to this article.

And, with planning under way to implement a joint-basing mandate to merge Fort Lewis with nearby McChord Air Force Base, some organizations would say the challenge is more than daunting.

But it's a challenge Fort Lewis officials have confronted head-on — with winning results.

Following its annual readers' poll,

the Army Times named Fort Lewis the service's best post for 2003. The following year, the installation was the runner-up in the same poll, with first-place finishes in six of seven quality-of-life categories. And the Association of Defense Communities honored Fort Lewis as the Defense Installation of the Year for 2006.

"The entire Fort Lewis team —



▲ The expansion of Fort Lewis and its facilities will mean greater training opportunities for Soldiers — such as these ROTC cadets and active-duty medics taking on the litter obstacle course at the post's Medical Simulation Training Center.



Soldiers, civilian employees, retirees, contractors, community volunteers and families — deserves the credit for making the installation a world-class power-projection platform for our nation and a great place to live and work,” said garrison commander COL Thomas G. Knight.

Growth at Fort Lewis means growth for the South Puget Sound area. That’s why the close relationships developed among the installation and nearby cities and towns are so important.

“The communities around us are integral to accomplishing our mission,” said Bill Crane, deputy garrison commander. “We depend on them for housing, services and even operational support.”

Making sure Army leaders, Soldiers and families at Fort Lewis are well received in the local communities requires communication, and Fort Lewis’ innovative Community Con-

nections program helps keep information flowing.

The program teams brigade-level units with community officials to allow them to exchange information and build bonds, said LTG Jim Dubik, I Corps commanding general.

“We’re lucky to live among such a great set of communities in the Pacific Northwest. The Community Connections program is another way we can show our appreciation for the support we receive,” he said.

The continuing migration of Soldiers to Fort Lewis through 2012 has rocketed housing to the forefront of installation issues. For Army families, on-post housing is managed through the Army’s Residential Communities Initiative under a 50-year contract with the joint real-estate team of Lincoln Property Co. and Equity Residential Properties.

At Fort Lewis, plans call for the RCI team to meet changing needs by

▲ Juan Munjarro guides a section of a four-bedroom duplex into position during construction of modular homes in Fort Lewis’ Hillside neighborhood.

renovating 3,105 homes, replacing 368 homes and building 863 more.

Meanwhile, the transformation of barracks into modern living spaces for today’s single Soldiers had already begun when the population boom struck. Installation master planners responded with an aggressive program of new construction and renovation that is changing the face of Fort Lewis.

Between 2006 and 2013 the program will add almost 4,700 new barracks rooms, while eliminating virtually all of the existing World War II wooden barracks that have provided temporary housing to training units and ROTC cadets.



The arrival of new units on post created demands for more than just quality-of-life infrastructure.

And, instead of carting the refuse of 300 demolished wooden buildings off to a landfill, installation environmental planners are preserving the land by reusing the building materials.

“The concept, 15 years ago, was to look at an old building as something nobody wants, smash it to the ground, and send it to the landfill,” said Matt Schultz, project manager for MCS Environmental, contractor for the reuse effort.

“The Army and the Corps of Engineers have recognized that it costs us money to dispose of things in a landfill. Second, we’re running out of real estate for landfills. And, finally, we’re sitting on a lot of reusable wood and other products,” Schultz said.

Planners identify markets for most

of the material. Porcelain bathroom fixtures, aluminum, steel, clean wood, concrete, brick and painted wood are all separated on-site for transport to reuse markets. Additional items such as roofing material, plastic, carpet and window glass go into recycling streams. In this way, Fort Lewis officials say they expect to exceed the Army chief of staff for installation management’s mandate requiring a 50-percent diversion of non-hazardous construction and demolition debris generated by the removal of buildings, renovations and construction on military installations.

Jason Kaye



▲ Soldiers from 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf. train at Fort Lewis’ high-tech Leschi Town urban training area. Fort Lewis has hosted the creation of three Stryker brigade combat teams — with a fourth on the way.

In an extreme example of reuse, an entire chapel, previously scheduled for demolition, is being moved to Fort Lewis’ Eco Park to be used as a classroom and education center for a multifaceted park that is growing from the site of a 240-acre landfill. Plans call for the education center to be functional by April 2007, to coincide with both the grand opening of Eco Park and with Earth Day, April 22.

The arrival of new units on post created demands for more than just increased quality-of-life infrastructure. Each new unit has its own specialized administrative and training needs, and the garrison at Fort Lewis is charged with supplying the facilities to meet those needs.

For example, the arrival of two battalion-sized aviation units required upgrades to the facilities at Gray Army Airfield. Refurbishment of three hangars, adjustment of mooring spacing,

◀ Soldiers from the I Corps’ Special Troops Battalion share a game of pool in their barracks common area. New construction and renovations to existing barracks will add almost 4,700 barracks spaces at Fort Lewis by 2013.

SGT Jeremy Hecker





▲ PVTs John Hadley, Kyle Handrahan and Joseph Radich, all of 1st Sqdn., 2nd Cav. Regt., run through a Joint Conflict and Tactical Simulations scenario at Fort Lewis' Battle Command Training Center.

development of 10 acres of apron and the resurfacing of two taxiways were needed to start. The apron alone required 400,000 square feet of concrete.

Besides the scenery of the Pacific Northwest, Fort Lewis is perhaps best known as the home of the Stryker. Three Stryker brigade combat teams have been established there — one of them a new unit created from scratch.

Although the 2nd Cavalry Regiment recently left Fort Lewis for re-stationing in Germany, the post's fourth new Stryker brigade will be created this fall. And, with each new Stryker unit comes a new demand for barracks, headquarters spaces, motor pools and specialized training facilities.

One of those facilities is the installation's Battle Command Training Center. Built, furnished and equipped for \$21 million, the 67,000-square-foot center contains 52 miles of com-

munications cable, 844 computers, an auditorium that seats 260, and almost 110 military, civilian and contractor staff members.

The BCTC, which opened in 2005, replaced 16 older buildings that housed portions of Fort Lewis' training-simulation community.

The center does more than offer training to Stryker soldiers. Live, virtual and constructive simulations are the heart of the facility, and they provide multi-echelon, leader development and individual training to virtually any type of unit.


Fort Lewis shares that capability with its sister services, neighboring law-enforcement and emergency-management organizations and other "first-responder" agencies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington State Patrol, Tacoma Fire Department and U.S. Coast Guard are among the dozens of agencies that have trained in the BCTC.

Reaching out to offer assistance to local, state and regional organizations is only a small part of Fort Lewis' outreach to its neighbors. Post lead-

ers know that the installation doesn't exist in a vacuum, and successful transformation on post means successful, cooperative relationships off post.

Local officials agree.

"Beyond our respect for their service to the nation, the military offers jobs to the community, and individuals and units volunteer to make our community better," said David W. Graybill, president and chief executive officer of the nearby Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce.

"We owe thanks to the many wonderful South Puget Sound communities that surround us," Knight said. "The bonds we have forged with our civilian neighbors are extremely important to us, and we're grateful for the steadfast support of our friends and for the community relationships we enjoy in the beautiful Pacific Northwest." 



AT first glance, the small Army post at the foot of Mauna Kea volcano on the island of Hawaii looks like it belongs in a different era; hundreds of tan Quonset huts, faded from the near-constant sunshine, are spread across the grounds.

Here and there sits a more recently constructed building, but Pohakuloa Training Area is known for its Quonset huts, the half-circle shaped, corrugated-metal buildings first used during World War II.

The huts don't, however, represent a time-forgotten place; PTA bustles with activity. The sole Installation Management Command post on the island, it's a focal point in U.S. Army, Hawaii's, effort to transform the 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, from

a light-infantry unit to a Stryker brigade combat team.

Although the 2nd Bde. is stationed on Oahu, about 200 miles from PTA, training restrictions there limit opportunities for SBCT Soldiers to hone their skills. With 133,000 acres of land that includes a 51,000-acre impact area, PTA allows the brigade and other military units to fire every weapon in their inventories. Additionally, a newly acquired parcel of land will offer commanders the opportunity to conduct large-scale, cross-country, mounted-maneuver training.

PTA's Past

Before there was an Installation Management Activity dedicated to supporting and sustaining Soldiers, for 50 years PTA supported and sustained Pacific region active and reserve-

component units from each of the defense services, as well as employees of civilian law-enforcement agencies, other federal organizations and allied military forces.

The area was first used during World War II as a Marine Corps artillery live-fire training area. Few, if any, permanent structures existed — when the Marines trained at PTA they slept in tents. After the war, PTA fell under the control of the Hawaii Territorial Guard, and in the mid-1950s the Army took over PTA and built the distinctive Quonset huts.

For a time, a contingent of Soldiers reinforced a civilian staff that supported units deployed to PTA. Then, with the creation of the IMA, PTA's Soldiers departed and were

Bob McElroy is the public affairs officer at Hawaii's Pohakuloa Training Area.

Managing

replaced by civil-service employees or contractors.

Today PTA's Pohakuloa Base Support Battalion's 170-member staff is composed primarily of civil servants and contractors. Only seven military personnel remain, including a Marine Corps gunnery sergeant who provides liaison to Marines based at Marine Corps Base Kaneohe, on Oahu, and two U.S. Air Force weather personnel.

Supporting Today's Force

PTA's 133,000 acres include an 80-acre cantonment area — which incorporates a fuel yard, fire and police departments, and an air field with a 3,700-foot runway — and everything to support up to 2,300 military person-

nel with such things as rations, ice, fuel and transportation.

The cantonment area also provides units with a task-force headquarters, dining facilities, a troop medical clinic, a movie theater and a Quonset-hut chapel.

PTA's firing ranges allow units to conduct small-arms and crew-served weapons familiarization training and qualifications. Units also come to PTA to take advantage of its convoy live-fire course and to conduct helicopter live-fire training.

Since May, C-17 Globemaster III aircraft from the 15th Tactical Airlift Wing at Oahu's Hickam Air Force Base have conducted heavy-drop training over PTA's Mikilua Drop Zone.

PTA's Range Operations staff controls all training activities from its year-old Command and Range Control facility.

Protecting the Environment

Besides providing world-class training facilities to deployed units, PTA's staff is committed to maintaining strong ties with the local community. Its outreach programs support public schools and veterans groups, the island's civic groups and the Hawaii County Fire Department.

The PTA Fire Department also provides a valuable resource to the Big Island's communities. Given PTA's remoteness — 35 miles from the nearest city — its firefighters are the first responders to serious traffic accidents on the state highway that bisects the post.

Pohakuloa Training Area on Hawaii lies in the saddle formed by Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea volcanoes. In this view the cantonment area is in the foreground, the impact area and firing ranges are beyond the cantonment area and Mauna Loa lies in the background.

Pohakuloa

Story and Photos by Bob McElroy



In the summer of 2005 PTA firefighters joined their civilian counterparts in battling a 25,000-acre fire that threatened housing areas on the western coast of the island.

As the only active military installation on the Big Island, PTA is also a focal point for the island's veterans. PTA Soldiers and civilians support veteran's activities, and frequently host veteran's groups who visit the post to interact with Soldiers and observe their training.

▼ A 45th Special Troops Battalion Soldier fires his .50-caliber machine gun during unit convoy training at PTA. Live-fire training is also available.



Recently, PTA Soldiers, civilians and deployed Soldiers and Marines provided hundreds of hours of volunteer work to spruce up the long-neglected West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery. They cleared out weeds and planted hundreds of native Hawaiian plants, trees and shrubs.

Officials at the Department of the Interior recently recognized the effort, awarding PTA the 2006 Take Pride in America National Award for volunteer service that benefits public lands.

PTA's community outreach and education doesn't end there. The Natural and Cultural Resources staffs host Big Island students and teachers twice annually for educational and field

activities. The goal is to educate the community on how the Army preserves, protects and manages PTA's sensitive and endangered natural and cultural resources.

The Natural Resources staff grows native and endangered plants in its rare-plant propagation facility and, when the plants mature, plants them in the training area. In addition to

▼ Bundles dropped by a C-17 Globemaster III cargo aircraft of the Air Force's 15th Airlift Wing float to the ground at PTA's Mikilua Drop Zone. The Air Force made the first C-17 heavy drops at PTA in May 2006.



▲ PTA's firing ranges allow units to conduct small-arms and crew-served weapons familiarization training and qualifications. Here, Soldiers engage targets with their personal weapons.

► A simulated improvised explosive device detonates near a 29th Engineer Battalion vehicle during a convoy live-fire exercise.

re-plantings, the Natural Resources staff conducts vigorous invasive-plant control using weed whackers and herbicide. They also erect fences when an endangered plant population is threatened by the wild sheep and goats that roam the training area.

PTA's Cultural Resources staff is smaller than the Natural Resources staff, but its five archaeologists have a job no less important — mapping, preserving and protecting sensitive native Hawaiian cultural sites and objects found in the training area.

The PTA commander also hosts a Cultural Advisory Committee, which consists of members of the native Hawaiian community. The CAC serves as an advisory body to the commander and provides two-way communication between the native Hawaiian community and the Army.

Finally, PTA's commitment to environmental protection would not be complete without mentioning the role of its Integrated Training Area Management program.

Although currently staffed by two people, PTA ITAM plays a critical role in monitoring the effect of unit train-

▼ An OH-58D Kiowa Warrior from the Hawaii-based 1st Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, engages a target with two folding-fin aerial rockets during training at PTA.



ing on training areas. When the ITAM manager determines that the training impact has been too great, he recommends a new area be used for training to allow the affected area to recover.

A Bright Future

The 2nd Bde., 25th Inf. Div., is currently fielding its Stryker vehicles and will soon deploy from Schofield Barracks, Oahu, to PTA to train on the new systems. With the SBCT fielding, PTA will see significant changes.

Among them will be the addition of several 60-foot antenna towers for the Fixed Tactical Internet the SBCT will use to communicate; a new Battle Area Complex that will provide realistic live-fire training for the Stryker

crews; other new firing ranges; and larger training areas for the unit to practice mounted and dismounted maneuvers.

The Air Force will continue to conduct C-17 heavy drops monthly or semi-monthly, and high-altitude bombing runs on occasion. The Navy will continue to use PTA's impact area for bombing runs by its carrier-based aircraft and the Marines will continue to deploy from Oahu's Kaneohe Bay to train for combat.

Eventually, the ubiquitous Quonset huts will be replaced by new troop billets, four of which will soon be finished, along with a new multipurpose recreation center. But for the next several years, this remote Army post on the Big Island will continue its IMCOM mission of supporting and sustaining Pacific-based military units out of the same buildings through which generations of military personnel have passed.





Marching for the Soldiers of Bataan

Story by Mike Cast and Monte Marlin

THOUSANDS of Soldiers and civilians converge at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., each spring to share the common experiences of blisters, sore muscles and exhaustion, as they undertake the grueling Bataan Memorial Death March.

"It's an amazing experience," said 2LT Todd Perry, a member of Team America, which won the Military Heavy Coed Division at the 2006 march. He said the camaraderie, sense of accomplishment and opportunity to pay respect to older veterans are rewards participants take from the march.

Ray Pickering, a New Mexico State University ROTC student, along with 134 other people, started the memorial march in 1987 by hiking 22 miles from the university's Las Cruces campus to Baylor Canyon, in southern New Mexico.

Over the years, the event grew in

popularity and length to the marathon standard, 26.2 miles, and was relocated inside the boundary of WSMR.

Now entering its 18th year, the memorial march honors the Soldiers who defended the islands of Luzon, Corregidor and the harbor defense forts of the Philippines at the onset of World War II. They fought in a malaria-infested region, surviving on

half- or quarter-rations, with little or no medical care. And they fought with outdated equipment and virtually no air support.

On April 9, 1942, tens of thousands of American and Filipino soldiers surrendered to Japanese forces. They were marched for days in the scorching heat through the Philippine jungles. Thousands died. Those who

Mike Cast works in the Developmental Test Command Public Affairs Office. Monte Marlin works at the Public Affairs Office at White Sands Missile Range.

➤ Marchers pay their respects to Bataan survivor Ben Montoya at the Bataan Memorial Death March start line.

➤ More than 3,800 people, both military and civilian — representing all 50 states, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada and Korea — participated in the 2006 Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range, N.M.

Kevin Casey





▲ Domino Soto-Santara reflects on his long journey. He was one in a group of Soldiers deemed the "Amputeam," coming from Walter Reed and Brooke Army medical centers.

◀ Arizona Army National Guard SGT Laurel Walker applies green duct tape to the foot of fellow marcher SPC Alex Kratzenberg.

survived faced death or years of hardship in prisoner-of-war camps.

The nearly 3,900 Soldiers and civilians who participated in the 2006 Bataan Memorial Death March represented the Army and all 50 states, as well as the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada and South Korea, said CSM Allen Fritzsching of the U.S. Army Developmental Test Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Survivors of the actual World War II death march were present and received recognition for their wartime

service and sacrifices.

Team and individual marchers compete in various categories, such as "Military Men's Heavy," for military members willing to shoulder heavy rucksacks, and "Military Men's

Light," in which marchers wear a pistol belt and web gear instead of rucksacks. Civilian marchers compete in similar categories.

Other participants in the 2006

event included BG Michael Combest, commander of the Aberdeen, Md.,-based DTC and his aide de camp, CPT Michael Lind.



Prospective participants in the upcoming March 25 event should visit the Bataan March Web site, www.bataanmarch.com, for helpful training-regimen tips.

It was the second such march for Combest and Lind, who both participated in 2005, and the first for Fritzsching.

Combest finished first in the men's military heavy category, age group 50-59. His DTC colleagues also fared well — Lind finished the march in 6 hours and 20 minutes, making him ninth to cross the finish line out of 118 finishers in his category and 20-29 age group. Fritzsching completed the march in 7 hours and 47 minutes, making him the 12th-place finisher out of 35 in the military men's heavy category, ages 30-39.

"We were physically and mentally ready for the most demanding marathon in the world," Lind said. "Meeting those ex-POWs and hearing

▶ A competitor takes a moment to greet a death march survivor, who wears his World War II uniform for the occasion.

their stories and trials gives fighting for freedom a much higher meaning. We are a part of the greatest Army in the world, not just because of how we fight, but why we fight.”

Combat veterans who lost limbs in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq came to White Sands from Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to march together as the “Amputeam.”

Soldiers’ annual participation in the White Sands march not only honors the victims and survivors of the atrocities in the Philippines, but demonstrates that today’s military, like the U.S. military that fought in World War II, is tough and prepared to accept any challenge, Fritzsching said.

The stamina needed for a marathon march over rough terrain comes from plenty of exercise and training.

The three Soldiers from APG, who trained both together and separately, carried packs that weighed between 35 and 40 pounds when they road marched and ran varying and increasing distances near their home installation.

One of their training routes covered a nearly 19-mile distance, something the three of them completed three times before the White Sands event. Not content to merely speed march with a rucksack, Lind ran the distance carrying his 36-pound pack and finished after about 3 hours and 20 minutes.

“We trained differently this year than last year,” Combest said. “Last year we completed a lot of shorter marches, from six to eight or nine miles. This year we did fewer of them, but they were a lot longer. We did three 19-milers, five 12-milers and a handful of 10-milers. That made a difference. It was less wearing on my feet, my joints and my legs. The other thing I found that was very helpful was to take the rucksack, put 40 pounds in it and get on the Stairmaster.”

➤ Two-thirds of the way through the 26.2-mile memorial course, a marcher refreshes himself at a water mister station.

The three Soldiers said the challenging training regimen gave them a considerable edge during the March 2006 event.

Despite some difficulties during that march — Lind suffered burst membranes in his nose and pulled muscles in his leg and had to walk the last 15 miles — “I will definitely be doing it again in March 2007,” Lind said.

Combest, Lind and Fritzsching recommend the Bataan Memorial Death March to all Soldiers and civilians looking for a fulfilling physical challenge. 🚩

Kevin Casey



Bowled

Story by Mary Kate Chambers

Over

SOME 80 high school football players across the country have been selected to participate in one of the Army's highest-profile public-relations events, the U.S. Army All-American Bowl.

The game, to be played Jan. 6 in San Antonio, Texas, is the feature event in a series of outreach activities designed to support Army recruiting efforts.

"This initiative helps the command and the Army maintain their connections with America," said Tom Tiernan, outreach and event marketing chief at U.S. Army Accessions Command.

This year the event drew a crowd of more than 31,000, the largest since the first All-American Bowl in 2002. And with a national television audience the event, intended to help develop leads for recruiters and referrals for Cadet Command, will reach millions of educators, coaches, parents and others who play powerful roles in the lives of young people.

The All-American Bowl opens doors for discussion between recruiters and high school football coaches about what the Army can do for the football players, said Tiernan.

Many football players don't get scholarships and need other opportunities in order to be successful in life,

Mary Kate Chambers works for the U.S. Army Recruiting Command.

▶ Players take the field before a crowd of more than 31,000 for the 2006 U.S. Army All-American Bowl. The 2007 event will be played Jan. 6 in Texas.



► MG W. Montague Winfield, commander of U.S. Army Cadet Command, joins Soldiers and enlistees on the field during the 2006 pre-game ceremony.

Tiernan said. The All-American Bowl gives recruiters the chance to educate coaches on opportunities available in the Army.

Though the connection between football and the Army may not be an obvious one, sports like football actually instill values that are a hallmark of today's Army.

Tiernan compared the players on a football team with an Army squad.

"It's the same as in the Army where a squad comes together and the individuals bring their own skills and talents," Tiernan said. Under the proper leadership, they become a cohesive team, more powerful than any one individual.

Recruiters distributed 400 player nominations made by football-player recruiters in August, and a selection tour began in September.

Besides on-the-field skills, U.S. Army All-Americans must be high school seniors, eligible to graduate in the spring of the year in which they participate, and in good standing in their schools and communities.

A player in the 2006 bowl, Micah Johnson, is a case in point.

Being selected for the bowl was especially meaningful to this line-backer. His father, LTC Skip Johnson, deployed to Iraq in September 2005. He missed his son's senior season, including the bowl game.

"Even though I wasn't there, I watched part of the game and was there in spirit," the elder Johnson said. He was able to connect with his son through a segment on ESPN, via satellite.

"It was real cool to play in the All-American Bowl," the younger Johnson said. "I had wanted to play in it because I would be representing the



Soldiers and my country."

As a senior at Fort Campbell, Ky., High School, Johnson was one of the nation's top football prospects. He earned his state's "Mr. Football" honor after playing just two years for the school team.

Johnson considered playing college football at Georgia State and the University of Notre Dame, but ultimately chose the University of Kentucky, where his brother Christian already was a member of the football team.

Johnson said the environment at the bowl was "intense."

"The atmosphere in San Antonio is big," he said. "All week we got tons of fan support."

Many of the activities included in previous All-American Bowl programs will return in 2007. During pre-game activities last year, veterans of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom were introduced to the crowd. Fort Sam Houston Advanced Individual Training Soldiers recited the Soldier's Creed.


Army Vice Chief of Staff GEN Richard A. Cody enlisted some 100 new recruits, while GEN William Wallace, the commanding general of Training and Doctrine Command,

commissioned two ROTC graduates.

The U.S. Army Field Band participated, and 101st Airborne Division Soldiers rappelled from the Alamodome's rafters to present the game ball to the players.

"The value of bringing these folks from the Army is that it's an opportunity to showcase the Army," said Tiernan.

Leads for potential new recruits are also generated at All-American Bowl-related events, such as a breakfast, awards dinner, cheerleading clinic and what's called the Fan Fiesta.

A band competition held in previous years will be replaced in 2008 with the U.S. Army All-American Band, with participants selected from each of the 50 states. The change will allow recruiters to reach out to another group of high school students and their parents, Tiernan said. 

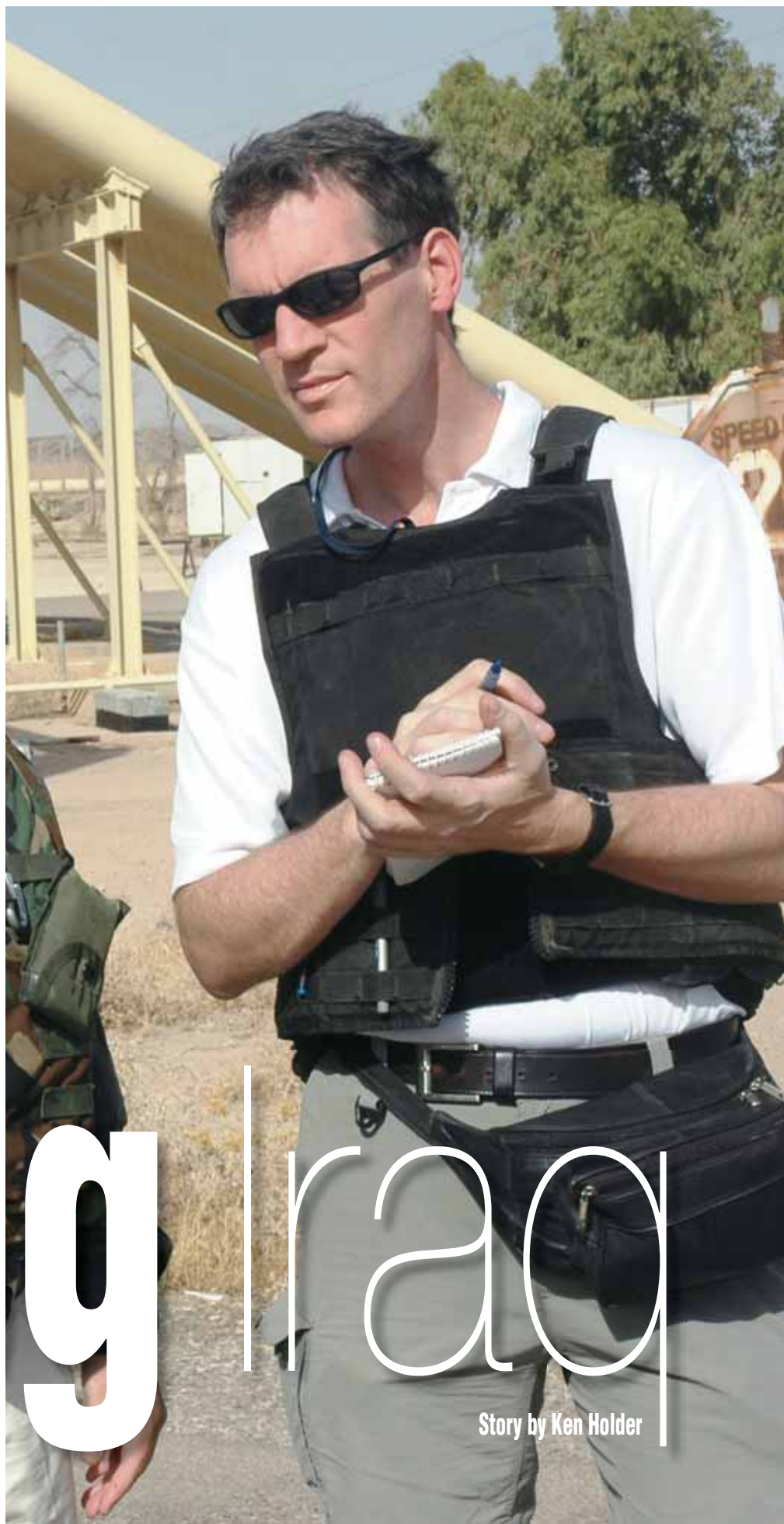


Additional information on the Army All-American Bowl can be found at www.army.mil, keyword search "Army All-American Bowl."

Bob Farrell, the oil program manager for USACE GRS, explains the construction progress at an Iraqi oil facility to New York Times reporter Jim Glanz and Kathye Johnson, the deputy director of the USACE GRS Project and Contracting Office.

Ken Holder

Rebuilding



Story by Ken Holder

With the help of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Iraqi people are slowly rebuilding their nation.

AN active insurgency, 30 years of a dictator's neglect and the ravages of several wars have made the challenge to rebuild Iraq greater than anyone could have imagined, Army Corps of Engineers officials have said.

Yet, in southern Iraq, the Iraqi people, with the help of the COE's Gulf Region, South, District, are slowly rebuilding the nation.

"The Gulf Region, South, District is responsible for nine provinces in southern Iraq," said COL Gary Johnston, GRS commander. "The district ranges from south of Baghdad to the port of Basrah on the Persian Gulf. The area encompasses only about a third of Iraq, but contains half of Iraq's governing provinces."

In concert with its coalition partners and the Iraqi government, the district has initiated more than 1,300 projects to re-establish the basic infrastructure for health care, water, electrical power and transportation.

To help begin to pay for much of

Ken Holder is the public affairs officer for the Corps of Engineers' Gulf Region, South, District.



▲ Students of the Dahuk Boys High School surround Derek Walker, who helped refurbish their school.

this future work the Corps has also invested in helping Iraq jump start its oil industry to meet Iraq's future needs.

"To date, more than 1,000 of these projects have been completed and turned over to the Iraqi government," Johnston said. "The resources required to complete the projects included a dedicated district civilian and military work force, outstanding service from the soldiers of the coalition, numerous contractors and \$2.6 billion of project funding."

"Most importantly, completed projects are a testament to the hard work and selfless service of thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians. It is not a story you hear much about on the news, but without the help of people who truly believe in Iraq as a free and independent nation, we wouldn't have accomplished what we have," Johnston said.

GRS District is one of three Army COE districts in Iraq. Gulf Region, North, District is located at Camp Speicher,

near Tikrit. Gulf Region, Central, is located at Camp Liberty, near Baghdad, and GRS district is located at Base Camp Adder, near Nasiriyah.

GRS covers an area roughly the size of Wisconsin, so "getting to the projects to do quality-assurance inspections is a challenge," said Andy Adams, chief of engineering and construction. "In some cases there's a security challenge. In other cases it's simply that the condition of roads, or lack thereof, makes getting from place to place difficult. That's why we rely

so heavily on our Iraqi associates."

The district has more than 120 Iraqi engineers to keep contractors focused on completing their projects within a set period.

"The Iraqi engineers employed by the Corps are the backbone of our whole effort here," said LTC Lorenzo Valenzuela, GRS deputy commander. "They are our eyes and ears out on the projects. Without

them, I'm not sure we'd be as successful as we have been at completing our projects. Having them work alongside us has also led to what we call 'capacity development.' The Iraqis have learned a lot from us about modern construction and engineering principles. Once we leave they'll be able to put what they've learned to use."

Among those things is safety on the job, said Russ Fennema, GRS safety manager.

"It was not uncommon when I first got here to see workers not wearing proper safety gear," Fennema said. "They didn't wear hard hats or even shoes sometimes. Often I saw work-



► Thomas L. Armstrong, chief of engineering and construction for USACE's Gulf Region, North, presents a box of colored markers to a student wearing traditional Kurdish clothing.

More than 98 public-works and water projects valued at more than \$442 million have been awarded. Of those projects, 67 projects, valued at \$48 million, have been completed.

ers wearing sandals in a place where they needed to be wearing boots.”

The district works closely with provincial and local governments, military units, law-enforcement organizations and tribal leaders on all projects. Much of the work involves large-scale projects that affect an entire province or the entire nation of Iraq, Johnston said. Much of the electrical work done by GRS supports the national electric grid, for example. While many of the large-scale projects help the entire nation, the district also assists with reconstruction efforts that help individual communities.

The average Iraqi citizen really appreciates the Corps’ efforts to rebuild at the community level, Johnston said. The dollar amount devoted to smaller-scale projects, such as checkpoints, school renovations and roads, is far less than the millions spent on national-level projects, but their impact is tremendous, he added.

More than 122 electricity projects valued at more than \$865 million dollars have been awarded, and 46 projects valued at \$522 million dollars have been completed.

The Khor Az Zubayr Power Plant, valued at over \$125 million dollars, generates enough electricity to supply power to 226,000 homes or 2.5 million people each day, Johnston said.

The district is also playing a vital role in repairing Iraq’s oil infrastructure in the southern provinces. More than 111 oil projects valued at \$652 million dollars have been awarded. Fifty-six projects valued at \$206 million dollars have been completed.

“Oil and gas are the economic engines that will run this country,” said

Sandy Rayl, oil program manager for GRS. “Right now oil is Iraq’s major export. Someday that may change, but right now the Iraqi people need the income these facilities are capable of generating. They need our help, and they appreciate what we’re doing”

More than 98 public-works and water projects valued at more than \$442 million have been awarded. Of those projects, 67 projects, valued at \$48 million, have been completed.

Those include water filtration, sewage treatment and irrigation. Because of the Corps’ work more than one million Iraqis have clean drinking water, Corps officials said.

Additionally, in the transportation and communication arenas, the district has awarded 123 projects valued at \$132 million and completed 69 projects valued at \$50 million.

The district has awarded contracts for 458 buildings, housing and education projects valued at \$120 million. To date, 434 projects worth

\$96 million have been completed.

Three hundred seventy of the finished projects are school renovations. The district is also completing a \$10.8 million renovation of the Najaf Teaching Hospital, and a \$9.4 million renovation of the Najaf Maternity and Pediatric Hospital.

Three hundred sixty-eight security and justice projects totaling \$410 million were awarded, with 332 completed at a total cost of \$294 million. These projects include border forts, police stations, fire stations and Iraqi army barracks throughout the region.

Future plans call for 147 additional projects throughout the southern region, valued at more than \$417 million, COE officials “Our goal at GRS is to get our projects completed quickly and safely, while maintaining high quality,” Johnston said. “Iraq deserves our very best effort, and they’re getting it every day as we help them rebuild their nation — one brick at a time.”

Ken Holder



► Air Force Capt. Jason Campbell, GRS resident engineer, gets a construction update on the Nasiriyah drainage pump station from an Iraqi engineer.



▲ Members of the Supply Support Activity at Operating Base Warhorse in eastern Iraq remove incoming vehicle repair parts from a truck. The parts will be sorted and then sent on to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team unit that needs them.

Keeping 'Em Rolling

Story and Photos by SPC Lee Elder

IT'S midnight at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, and a full moon beams down onto the parking lot of a bustling warehouse as a stream of trucks moves in.

While most operations on the bustling base camp in eastern Iraq have ground to a halt, a day of activity has just begun for a handful of Supply Support Activity Soldiers. They unload, process and move a mountain of pallets carrying vital equipment to support operations of the 4th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

"We get everything from toilet paper to tank tracks," said SSG Robert Sylvia of Company A, 64th Bde. Support Battalion, the midnight shift's noncommissioned officer in charge. "We handle everything."

SPC Lee Elder is with the 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

"We get everything from toilet paper to tank tracks," said SSG Robert Sylvia, the midnight shift's NCOIC. "We handle everything."

Tonight's push consists of vehicle parts. It's crucial that the parts be inventoried and made ready for the mechanics next door who have many vehicles awaiting repair parts.

It's these parts for trucks, Bradley fighting vehicles and tanks that are "most critical," said the battalion's CW4 Kathy Herring, the warehouse's technician and accountability officer.

"Because of the heat and the road conditions, there is a constant need for repair parts," she said.

Herring and her supervisor, 1LT Forest Gibson, oversee SSA operations at FOB Warhorse. The operations not only support units at the base, but units on three nearby bases as well.

With the exception of fuel and ammunition, just about every essential element flows through the huge warehouse and adjacent tents and supply yard manned by the SSA's 26 people. It's a round-the-clock operation.

The SSA also supports the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and contractor agencies. In addition to receiving, inventorying and storing supplies, SSA personnel ensure units are notified when their parts are in stock and when they're being delivered.

"It's a revolving mission all the time," Herring said. "There are requirements from the SSA, plus we still maintain support at the warehouse," which holds up to \$48 million worth of authorized stock items. At times, it also stores more than 5,000 repair parts.

While it's a big operation, those responsible are hardly in the limelight. And it's easy for their contributions to go unnoticed, Herring said.

"We don't let them get complacent," she added. "We constantly remind them that what they do is important, and even though it may seem thankless, it's much appreciated."

Like other Soldiers in Iraq, those working in the warehouse are also tasked to perform duties like pulling guard shifts, conducting headcounts at the dining facility and working in the company as the charge of quarters.

"I constantly remind Soldiers that they are the key to the brigade's success," Herring said. "What they do has a huge impact on how well the brigade does as a whole, since we're the logistics piece that drives everything else."

"Without us, there is nothing," said supply technician SGT Carmela Cereno. "Everything starts with us."

If Soldiers don't get a repair part they ordered for a Humvee, for example, the vehicle doesn't get fixed. And their mission can come to a halt.

To keep supplies moving, the warehouse runs two shifts. The bulk of the section's personnel are on the job through the night, when the weather is more tolerable.

"Seeing vehicles up and running, seeing repair parts coming through and knowing that we're supplying the mechanics with what they need to keep vehicles on the road, that is satisfaction in itself," Herring said. 🇺🇸



➤ SGT Leah Willis opens newly arrived cargo. She is the storage NCO for the FOB Warhorse SSA section.

Going for the Gold in Germany

Story by SSG Jacob Caldwell
Photos by CPT Kevin Calkins

SOLDIERS from the Vicenza, Italy-based 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team's 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, in Schweinfurt, Germany, recently participated in qualifications for the German army's Schuetzenschnur and Leistungsabzeichen badges. The tests took place at the German Army Regional Training Center, South, and Infantry School in Hammelburg.

Qualifying for the Schuetzenschnur, the German weapons proficiency badge, was a multi-day and multi-weapon event for the Soldiers. Depending on qualification scores, the badge is awarded with a bronze, silver or gold device, and is worn with a cord by U.S. enlisted Soldiers on their Class A uniforms.

The 1st Sqdn. Soldiers qualified

on the German P8 9mm pistol, G3 7.62mm rifle, G36 5.56mm rifle and MG3 7.62mm machine gun. And all 26 Soldiers who participated in the event qualified for a Schuetzenschnur badge.

While aiming for a Schuetzenschnur is a fairly common occurrence for Soldiers in the squadron, the chance to earn a Leistungsabzeichen, a German

army physical-fitness badge, is a rare opportunity and proved to be a greater challenge, event participants said.

Qualifying for the Leistungsabzeichen is also a multi-day, multi-task event that German soldiers normally compete for over the course of a year. Soldiers of the 1st Sqdn. were allowed to complete requirements for the badge over four days. Bronze, silver and gold devices are the awards for various fitness levels, but all of the Americans aimed for the gold.

They were required to complete



▲ PFC Lucas Carlisle of C Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, throws the 6.25 kilogram Kugel during the Leistungsabzeichen German Army Physical Fitness Badge test conducted in Hammelburg, Germany.



SSG Jacob Caldwell is assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office. CPT Kevin Calkins is assigned to the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment.


first-aid tasks, a 30-kilometer foot march in five hours and 100- and a 400-meter sprints. Additionally, the PT test included a three-kilometer run and completion of either a 15-kilogram stone throw, an 8-kilogram shot-put event or a 100-meter swim. A long jump and a 200-meter swim completed the list of challenges.

Even though only four of the Soldiers qualified for the gold Leistungsabzeichen, all of the competitors appreciated training with their NATO counterparts, said CPT Kevin Calkins, the officer in charge of the event.

“During the march, there was a lot of interaction,” said Calkins, “even though there was something of a lan-

guage barrier, most of it on our side.”

German isn’t commonly taught in American schools, but all German schoolchildren learn English from an early age.

There was a lot of camaraderie among the U.S. and German soldiers, he said. The Americans “loved the challenging physical events. After the 30-kilometer foot march, I had some Soldiers come up to me, and even though their feet were like hamburger, they said it was the greatest time they’ve had in the Army.” 



◀ PVT Rusty Campbell of the 91st Cav. Regt.’s A Trp. participates in the 200-meter swim test, which followed a long-jump event.



SSG Terry Gilmore and SSG John Lambson of A Trp. fire the 7.62mm MG3 machine gun as part of the Schuetzenschnur test.

"TARHEELS"

Story and Photos by PFC Susan Blair

NORMALLY, getting a general-education diploma involves sitting in a classroom, then spending many nights studying.

For participants of a recent Tarheel Challenge, a 22-week program that helps prepare troubled kids for their high-school diploma equivalency test, it meant low crawling under barbed wire, swinging over a pit of water and rappelling from a 30-foot tower in 98-degree heat.

And that was only the first part of the challenge. The biannual program also included classroom instruction in reading, math, science, social studies, and computer and life skills.

PFC Susan Blair is assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office.

During the first portion of the challenge, participants were taken to Fort Bragg, N.C., where they underwent a two-week boot camp. During that time, the cadets learned how to work as members of a team and completed various training challenges, such as the Air-Assault Obstacle Course, a land-navigation course, a team assault course and the 82nd Airborne Division Pre-Ranger Course Obstacle Course.

Participants gain confidence, discipline and self-respect, and start working together as a team, said Eddie Toler, director of Tarheel Challenge.

During the boot camp, cadre focused on the eight core components upon which the challenge is based, including how to lead, follow and exhibit responsible citizenship; how

to provide service to the community; how to acquire life-coping and job skills; and how to be attuned to physical fitness, health, hygiene and academic excellence, said Toler.

Staying motivated to learn the components and complete the various obstacles was tough, given hot temperatures and multiple daily demands.

"It's been difficult, but everyone started pulling together as a team early on," said Scott Ingram, an 18-year-old participant from Rockingham, S.C.

Not only were the participants able to work as a team, but their motivation levels remained high, and in as little

▼ Rodney Quinn, 16, low crawls beneath barbed wire to complete the Air Assault Obstacle Course during Tarheel Challenge.



Participants gain confidence, discipline and self-respect, and start working together as a team.

as two weeks the cadets' attitudes had changed, said Mark Lason, a Tarheel Challenge team leader.

"It's very impressive," said Lason. "Normally in this type of weather the cadets throw their canteens down and want to quit, but none of them have done that."

From the first day Lason noticed a difference in the cadets' behavior. If the cadre gave cadets a task, the cadets questioned it or displayed negative attitudes in response to the request. But by the end of the two weeks, they did what they had to do, Lason said.

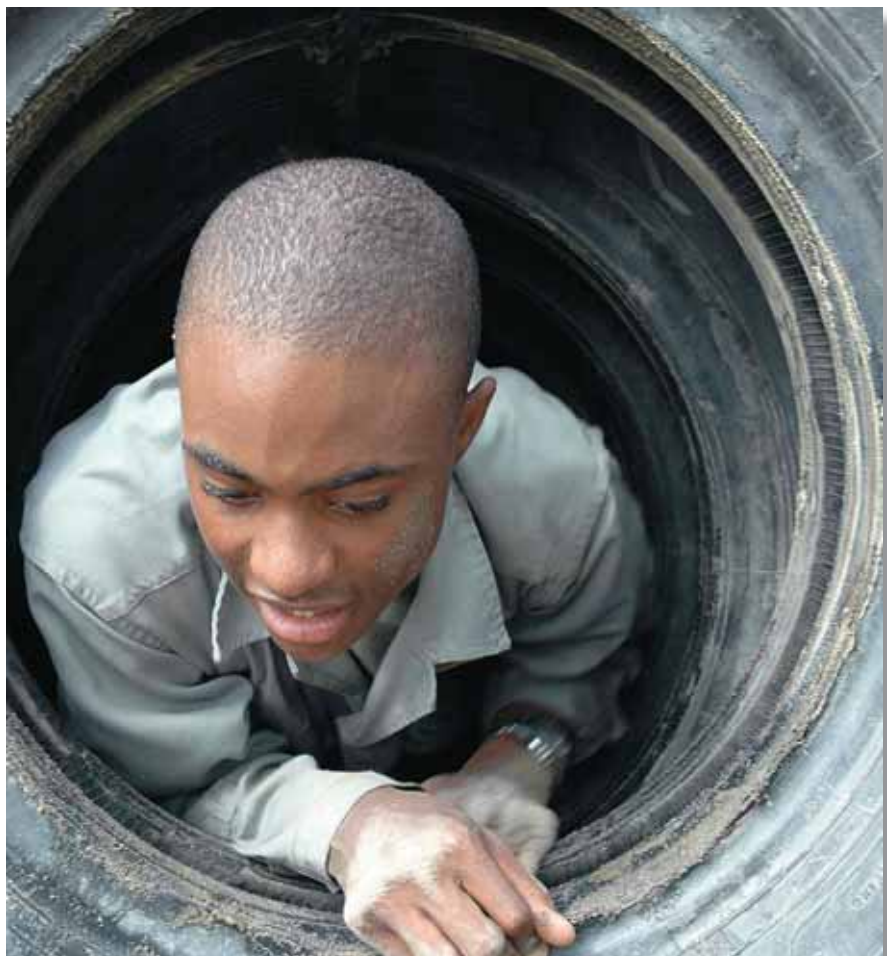
The cadre weren't the only ones who noticed a difference in the participants' attitudes — the cadets also noticed a difference.

Brentice Speller, 18, joined the program to better himself. He said he knows his lifestyle will change. He'll improve his eating and sleeping habits, and keep his personal space organized. He's also not going to take everything for granted.

Eric Davis has changed more than anyone in the two-week program, he said. "I needed a lot of discipline just to listen and follow directions," said Davis, 16. He acquired some discipline and, because he hadn't been smoking, his mind was clearer and he was more able to focus on a mission.

Because of the experience and the life-skills training that the Tarheel Challenge provides cadets, many will go on to community colleges, join the military or get jobs in the commercial work force, said Toler. 📧

➤ Stacey VonCannon, 17, jumps over hurdles while Allen Hariston, 16, makes his way through the tires at the Pre-Ranger course Obstacle Course at Fort Bragg.

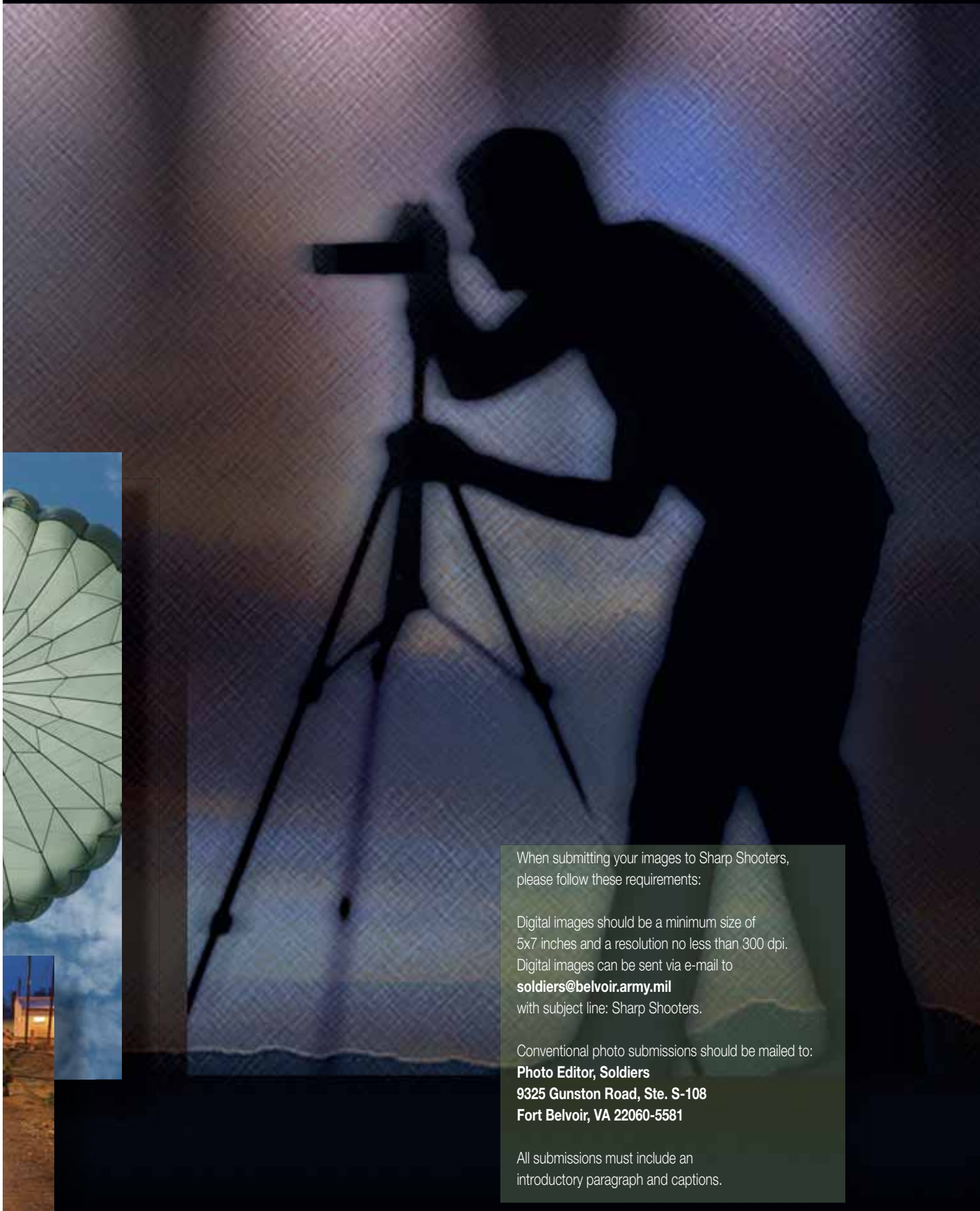


We Need Your

Sharp Shooters Submissions

SOLDIERS wants your submissions for its “Sharp Shooters” photo feature. We are looking for interesting, exciting and Army-themed images that, alone or in combination with three to five photographs, tell a complete story. Soldiers, family members and Army civilians — in fact any members of the *Soldiers* audience — are eligible to participate.





When submitting your images to Sharp Shooters, please follow these requirements:

Digital images should be a minimum size of 5x7 inches and a resolution no less than 300 dpi. Digital images can be sent via e-mail to **soldiers@belvoir.army.mil** with subject line: Sharp Shooters.

Conventional photo submissions should be mailed to:
Photo Editor, Soldiers
9325 Gunston Road, Ste. S-108
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581

All submissions must include an introductory paragraph and captions.

Better Meals for Soldiers

Story by Gerald Darsch and Kathy Evangelos

A HOME-cooked meal probably wouldn't survive three years' storage in a hot, stifling warehouse or being dropped out of an airplane. Most assuredly it wouldn't be fit to eat.

But if it were a Meal, Ready-to-Eat, it would be as fresh and tasty as the day it was prepared.

The development and testing of Soldiers' meals is the mission of some 100 employees of the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Center's Department of Defense Combat Feeding Program, whose specialties include food science, engineering and packaging.

Edible History

The MRE replaced the C-Ration in 1980. Up to 1987 the MRE contained such items as ham and chicken loaf, chicken a la king, and freeze-dried pork, beef and potato patties.

In 1988 eight of the original 12 entrees were replaced with more traditional favorites, including spaghetti with meat sauce.

Gerald Darsch is the director of Combat Feeding, and Kathy Evangelos is the Combat Feeding Program integrator. Both work at the Natick Soldier Center at the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Mass.

The MRE was delivered to troops in operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. However, initial feedback wasn't positive.

In 1991 the Joint Services Operational Rations Forum was tasked to redesign the MRE.

NSC's objective was to dramatically improve the quality and variety of the MRE, by ensuring yearly enhancements would be made to the standard MRE.

NSC surveyed Soldiers to find out what food items they wanted in their MREs. Then MRE

components were obtained from the commercial sector or developed at NSC. Prototype MREs were assembled and field-test sites and units were set up.

Two groups of Soldiers contributed to the field test. One group consumed the existing MRE, the other evaluated the new prototype menus and components. Surveys for the groups were collected and analyzed. Highly rated items replaced less acceptable ones.

The process, which began in 1991 and resulted in the addition of the first new MRE components in 1992,


continues today. From 1993 to 2006, more than 165 new items have been included in the MRE.

In 1992 hot sauce was added to every menu. In 1993 Soldiers received the Flameless Ration Heater. And 1994 saw the end of the MRE's freeze-dried fruit. Menus increased from 20 to 24 in 1998 and included four vegetarian meals. The hot beverage bag was added in 2005. And this year, the ergonomically designed drink pouch for dairy shakes was added.

Nothing goes into or out of an MRE without critical input from Soldiers. More than 6,000 service members have contributed to the MRE-improvement program since 1992, NSC officials said.

A Look Ahead

In the past two years some 29 new items have been approved for the MRE for 2007 and 2008. And Soldiers are currently participating in a field test of proposed new items for inclusion in the MRE in 2009.

Self-heating packages, new package designs, and heating and cooling technologies for rations and beverages will further enhance meals for Soldiers in the future, NSC officials said. 

► Developing and fielding nutritious MREs is an ongoing effort, and Soldier-testers are routinely given the opportunity to field test new meals.







Quilts for Casualties

Story and Photos by Brett B. McMillan

THOUSANDS of grateful citizens who can't come to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., to visit Soldiers who have been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan have found a way to reach out and say "Thank you."

Since the fall of 2003 quilters across the country and as far away as Australia have sent more than 2,800 quilts to WRAMC with the simple request

Brett B. McMillan works at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center Public Affairs Office.

that they be given to a service member wounded in the war on terror, said Chaplain (MAJ) John Kallerson.

"These folks can't come and visit, but they can show their love in many ways, and this is a very tangible way," he said. "It covers the wounded Soldiers, it comforts them, it holds them, it warms them — I like that image."

Shortly after Kallerson arrived at WRAMC as a chaplain in 2003, Catherine Roberts, a quilter from Delaware, called him.

"She asked me if I would be willing to receive a quilt to give to a Soldier," Kallerson said. "My wife is a quilter. She's always working on one, and there

▲ PFC Michael Stanley and his mother, Denise Rogan, display the "Honor Roll" quilt he was given. The quilters linked service members of previous wars to Stanley by having veterans from World War II to the Vietnam War sign squares in its pattern. They left one square blank for him to sign.

are more than 20 quilts around my house. So I said I would be happy to receive a quilt to give to a Soldier."

Roberts not only sent him a quilt, but also started a Web site called "Quilts of Valor." At the site, quilters interested in contributing quilts to service members were encouraged to contact Kallerson.

Noting that for every service member killed in the war on terror, several

Since the fall of 2003 quilters from around the country and as far away as Australia have sent more than 2,000 quilts to WRAMC to be given to wounded service members.

others are injured, Roberts said she wanted to do something special that would “calm the fires of their flashbacks or nightmares.” Giving them a well-made quilt was her way of reaching out to thank them for their sacrifices.

Thanks to the Internet, Roberts’ idea spread around the world to others who shared her love of quilting and support for service members. She said it’s the linking of the “quilt toppers,” who sew the top side of the quilt, and “long-armers,” who sew that top side together with the inner batting and the back side, that has made Quilts of Valor so successful.

Because of the group’s success, Kallerson began contacting chaplains at other hospitals, including the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Today, some 1,500 quilters across America are making quilts to send to 25 military and Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals, he said.

“I get 200 quilts a month right now and every wounded or injured Soldier, Airman, Marine and Sailor who comes to WRAMC gets a quilt,” Kallerson said. “These are full-size quilts, displaying some glorious work. It’s just one way the American public is reaching out to our wounded service members.”

On any morning, Kallerson enters his office to find it crowded with boxes of quilts. He takes the quilts to the hospital chapel, drapes them over the pews to admire the work that went into them and says a quiet prayer over each one.

“Hundreds of hours go into each of these quilts,” he said. The designs include Eastern stars, log cabins and lots of colors.

Some quilters have begun making pillowcases to put the quilts into to protect them. “Some get fancy and embroi-

der slogans on the pillowcases, such as “Support Our Troops.”

Sewn in a pattern on one quilt was “USA Hero.” From a distance the fabric of another quilt’s backing appears to be a light blue stripe, but upon closer inspec-



▲ This quilt was opened to find a message to a service member that shows the feelings of its creators. Project organizers receive about 200 quilts each month to give to troops recovering from their wounds or injuries in the war on terror.

tion the blue is the repeated script of the Pledge of Allegiance. Another quilt was labeled in the corner with a note: “Made with love to show thanks for your service to our country. God bless you.”

Most quilters send little notes inside their quilts, and some sign the quilts and include their hometowns, Kallerson said. “One anonymous quilter sent a note saying, ‘We just want the service members to know that we love them and we are sorry for what has happened to them, but we thank them for their service to our country.’”

While each quilt is special and is sent with respect and love, sometimes a certain quilt strikes a special chord with an individual. With the help of other chaplains at the hospital, the quilts are taken from the chapel on a big cart and distributed to the newly arrived patients.

“It’s a little funny sometimes how excited the Soldiers get,” Kallerson said. “Some of them think the chaplain is trying to sell them a blanket, but he tells them, ‘No, these are free. This is for you to thank you for your service — pick one.’ Well, then they are overwhelmed.”

“Patriotic-colored quilts are the most popular, but you may have a female Soldier who falls in love with a pink quilt. There was a quilt made with Dallas Cowboy fabric, and a guy from Texas absolutely fell in love with that one,” Kallerson said.


Whether for the art or for the message of thanks and the comfort the quilts provide, service members really do appreciate them, Kallerson said. “When you go upstairs to their rooms, they’re asleep with them.”

From the hospital dining facility to the president’s inauguration ball to ballgames, Kallerson said he’s seen wounded service members in wheelchairs with their quilts covering their laps. “I see it in the press all the time, our Soldiers with their quilts.”

Kallerson said he often tells the troops the quilts “will become an heirloom item in their families. It will represent the time when dad or grandpa was injured in the war. It will be something that gets passed on.”

Roberts, of the Quilts of Valor

foundation, said the mission has taken over her life

and she will continue her role linking the quilt topper and long-armer to service members “until all of our wounded are covered.” She recently began weekly podcasts as another means to inform people of the service, and invites participation through quilting or donations. 



For more information see www.govf.org or www.houseofhanson.com/gov.html.

Should I Leave Home Without It?

THE recent security scares at airports in both Britain and the United States — and the resultant departure delays and flight cancellations — have reinforced the need for every traveler to know and understand what may legally be taken aboard a commercial airliner.

Almost every week we read news articles about passengers who attempt to board aircraft with guns, knives and other prohibited items. I initially believed that there had been so much publicity about what not to attempt to carry aboard that everyone should know what the prohibited items are. Wrong!

While most people realize that obvious weapons are a no-go — things like box cutters and pistols — many are unsure about things like scissors, knitting needles and other common items. To determine exactly which items are categorized as prohibited, I turned to the

Transportation Security Administration's air travel Web page (www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/index.shtm) and found a wealth of information.

This handy source of official guidance covers all aspects of air travel, from preflight preparations to prohibited items, transporting special items, and tips for persons with disabilities and medical conditions.

The page that specifically covers what may and may not be carried aboard is at www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm. The information is broken down into such categories as alcoholic beverages, hunting and fishing equipment, musical instruments, parachutes, scuba equipment and photographic equipment, to name a few.

The Web page provides lists of items that may not be in carry-on bags, as well as those that are acceptable as long as they are in the passenger's checked baggage. For example, scissors with pointed tips cannot be carried aboard, but may be in checked baggage, while blunt-tip scissors may be carried on. As a result of the recent foiled terrorist plot in Britain, most liquids, gels and aerosols must be packed



Steven Chucala is chief of the Legal Assistance Division in the office of the Staff Judge Advocate at Fort Belvoir, Va.

in checked baggage and will not be permitted in carry-on bags. Be sure to check the TSA Web site for the most up-to-date information.

Persons with special considerations — such as disabilities, medical concerns, religious or cultural needs, and those with pets — should ensure they have accurate information before going to the airport. The TSA Web site provides assistance on each of these areas. If you're traveling overseas, bear in mind that security precautions may be more stringent than those that apply to flights within the United States.

Travelers should always remember that they might be held personally liable for violations of air travel-security regulations. While bringing

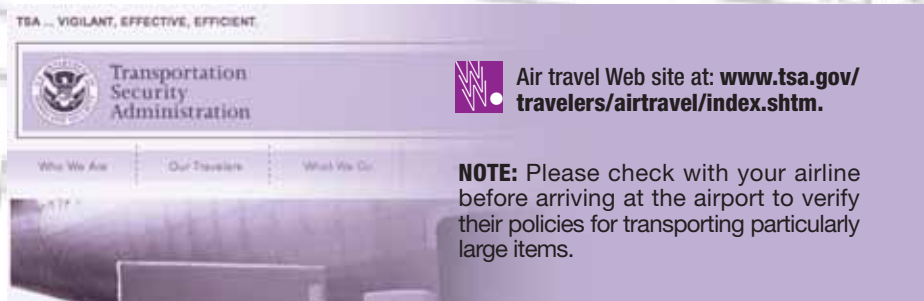
a prohibited item to the checkpoint might only result in the item's confiscation, knowingly attempting to take the item aboard could also lead to your being criminally and civilly prosecuted.

Airport security screeners are legally empowered to search both you and your baggage, and travelers should approach the screening process with a spirit of patience and cooperation. If you realize at the last moment that you're carrying something that may be prohibited, be prepared to voluntarily surrender it — but realize that voluntarily abandoned items cannot be recovered or returned to you.

You can help make your next flight a far more pleasant one by educating yourself about the most recent TSA regulations, and by ensuring that you and your baggage conform to them.



What may not be carried aboard is available on the web at www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm.



Know the Law!

MEDIC TRAINING SAVES LIVES

COMBAT Medic Advanced Skills Training is ensuring medics understand the difference between garrison and combat-trauma care.

Medics at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, recently participated in the new course, taught via video teleconference by the Army's Medical Department Center and School at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The week-long course tested student medics through a simulated combat scenario that involved treating Soldiers wounded by improvised explosive devices and small-arms fire.

Qualified instructors evaluated the medics' skills during a field exercise, and the medics were given a written test to validate their mastery of the training.

The course was founded on the basic principles of Tactical Combat-Casualty Care, with modifications to training segments on airway, chest trauma, hemorrhage and hypovolemic shock.

The modifications address the two leading causes of death on the battlefield — bleeding from extremity wounds and ten-



sion pneumothorax. Extremity wounds account for more than 60 percent of all wounds on today's battlefields.

And even with body armor, penetrating trauma can cause air to escape the body quickly, which creates pressure on the lungs, leading to asphyxiation. — *Army News Service*



ARMY ASSESSES NEW LAND WARRIOR SYSTEM

THE Army recently conducted an extensive operational assessment of the Land Warrior and Mounted Warrior Soldier systems at Fort Lewis, Wash.

Land Warrior, developed by Program Executive Office-Soldier at Fort Belvoir, Va., combines computers, lasers, navigation modules, radios and other technologically advanced equipment to improve Soldiers' situational awareness and their ability to communicate on the battlefield and, ultimately, their ability to fight effectively and survive.

Mounted Warrior, designed for combat-vehicle crew members, includes communications systems and displays that will improve situational awareness for Soldiers both on and off the vehicle.

The 2nd Infantry Division's 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, conducted the May-through-September assessment, which was sponsored by the Army Infantry Center at Fort Benning, Ga., and PEO-Soldier.

The battalion was equipped with 440 Land Warrior systems and 147 Mounted Warrior systems for the assessment, which will provide insights about the systems' combat effectiveness. — *ARNEWS*



For more information on the Land Warrior and Mounted Warrior systems visit www.peosoldier.army.mil or call (703) 704-2802.

Communications

ARMY MARS PROGRAM STILL GOING STRONG

MENTION "MARS Station" to retired service members and they'll tell you how they were able to talk with loved ones in the United States via phone patches, high-frequency radios and volunteer radio operators while serving overseas.

The U.S. Army Military Affiliated Radio System, a backup emergency-communications system, is still connecting loved ones at distant locations via phone-patching and MARS messages.

The Army MARS system operates 24-7, and participates in the National Communications Systems Shared Resources High Frequency Radio Program. Designed to bring federal, state and private-industry high-frequency resources together, it would allow emergency messages to be passed if normal communications channels were unavailable.

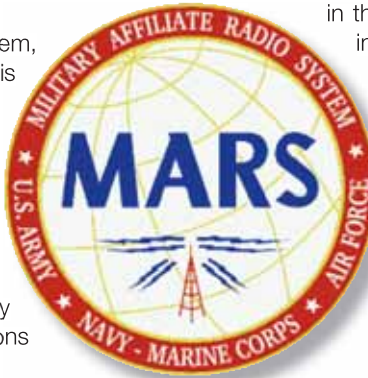
Government agencies involved in the program include the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department

of Homeland Security and the State Department.

During hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Fort Huachuca, Ariz., MARS Station relayed messages that could not be passed in the affected areas because the communications infrastructure was destroyed.

Along with voice traffic, MARS can pass large files with bulk information via computers.

MARS is made up of 2,500 member stations in the continental United States. Only 270 are military stations; the rest are civilian-volunteer stations. MARS relies almost exclusively on volunteer operators, who donate time and buy their own equipment to make the system work. — ARNEWS



For more information on MARS, visit www.netcom.army.mil/mars/default.htm.

Family

ARMY EXPANDS FAMILY CHILD CARE



THE Army has selected Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and 10 other posts to test a new program that offers military families more childcare options.

The program is also being tested at Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Riley, Kan.; Fort Campbell, Ky.; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Drum, N.Y.; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Lewis, Wash.; and in Maryland at Fort Meade, Aberdeen Proving Ground and Fort Detrick.

Through the Army Child Care in Your Neighborhood program, the Family Service Association of San Antonio, Texas, affiliated with the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, has partnered with the Army to help augment off-post childcare.

The partnership will ensure care provided in off-post homes and childcare centers meets stringent Army standards.

The Family Service Association has "recruited" two childcare centers and 25 civilian providers in areas surrounding Fort Sam Houston for use by local Army families.

To ensure quality of care, participating centers and in-home providers will be monitored by the Family Service Association to ensure their full compliance with standards.

Additionally, Army families using the program will be given a childcare subsidy, based on total family income and program fees.

— ARNEWS



Shopping

NEW EXCHANGE CATALOG AVAILABLE

Featuring a range of merchandise representing the Exchange's commitment to quality, value and selection, the catalog includes nearly 600 pages of popular, name-brand merchandise geared to help military families decorate, organize or just indulge.

Prices in this all-services catalog — which is available to all authorized exchange customers — are valid through Jan. 15, 2007.

Exchange privileges are authorized for active-duty military members, military retirees, Reservists, National Guard members, Department of Defense civilians working overseas, exchange employees and their family members.

Orders can be placed by mail, fax or phone. Toll-free orders can be placed from the United States, Puerto Rico or Guam by calling (800) 527-2345. The Exchange Catalog Center is open around the clock, seven days a week.

Complimentary international access calling is also available from several countries.

Authorized customers can also make online purchases at www.aafes.com. — AAFES Public Affairs



The catalog is available at main stores and online at www.aafes.com or www.cg-exchange.com.

Jumping For **Blinded Veterans**

I am jumping for all blinded American veterans,” said **MAJ Thomas Zampieri (Ret.)**, director of government relations for the Blinded Veterans Association. He was given a chance to skydive with the U.S. Army’s Golden Knights Parachute Team in rural Orange, Va., 90 minutes southwest of Washington, D.C.

Zampieri suffers from the disease retinitis pigmentosa and is almost completely blind himself. Before losing his sight he was on active duty, from 1972 to 1975. He joined the Army National Guard and served as a physician assistant from 1978 to 2000. He has been the BVA’s government-relations director since April 2005.

“After visiting blinded American veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, in Washington, D.C. last year, I decided to jump for them,” said Zampieri. “I want them to know that there are resources to help them become independent, enjoy life, and do fun things like skydiving in their recovery from blindness.”

Before the jump, he and various leaders of veterans’ and military-service organizations, who were also given an opportunity to jump, underwent a training session by Golden Knights tandem team leader SFC Billy Van Soelen, who, through video presentations, familiarized the group with parachute equipment and skydiving techniques, including how to correctly exit the plane, free fall and land.

After the training, the group was divided into several smaller groups. Throughout the day, each of the would-be jumpers was paired with a Golden Knights tandem partner.


After boarding the Golden Knights’ UV-21 Twin Otter jump aircraft and climbing to about 12,500 feet, the tandem teams exited the plane in single file, to enjoy what one jumper described as a “very quiet, calming and peaceful descent” to earth.



Each jump lasted about six minutes — a minute of free fall followed by five minutes of maneuvers — before the jumpers landed safely at their drop zone.

Zampieri said that during his jump he thought of other ways to raise the level of awareness of how blinded service members can get help, and ways in which they can lead active and independent lives.

A couple of weeks after the jump, Zampieri attended the 2006 Blinded Veterans Association National Convention in Buffalo, N.Y. There, he and blinded service members met with other blind veterans to develop “friendships and a strong support network,” he said.

“We all know how difficult the recovery from blindness can be,” Zampieri said. “Preventing blinded veterans from withdrawing into isolation is the largest hurdle to overcome.” 



For more information about help for blinded veterans, go to www.bva.org.

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

**To be a veteran,
one must know and
determine one's price
for freedom.**

For the best possible care,
call your VA point of contact.

For VA health care, contact your nearest
VA medical center or call (877) 222-8387.

For counseling and community support,
contact your nearest Vet Center.

For Information about:

- GI Bill education benefits, call 1-888-442-4551;
- Service member group life insurance,
call 1-800-669-8477;
- And for information about compensation,
home loan and other benefits,
call 1-800-827-1000

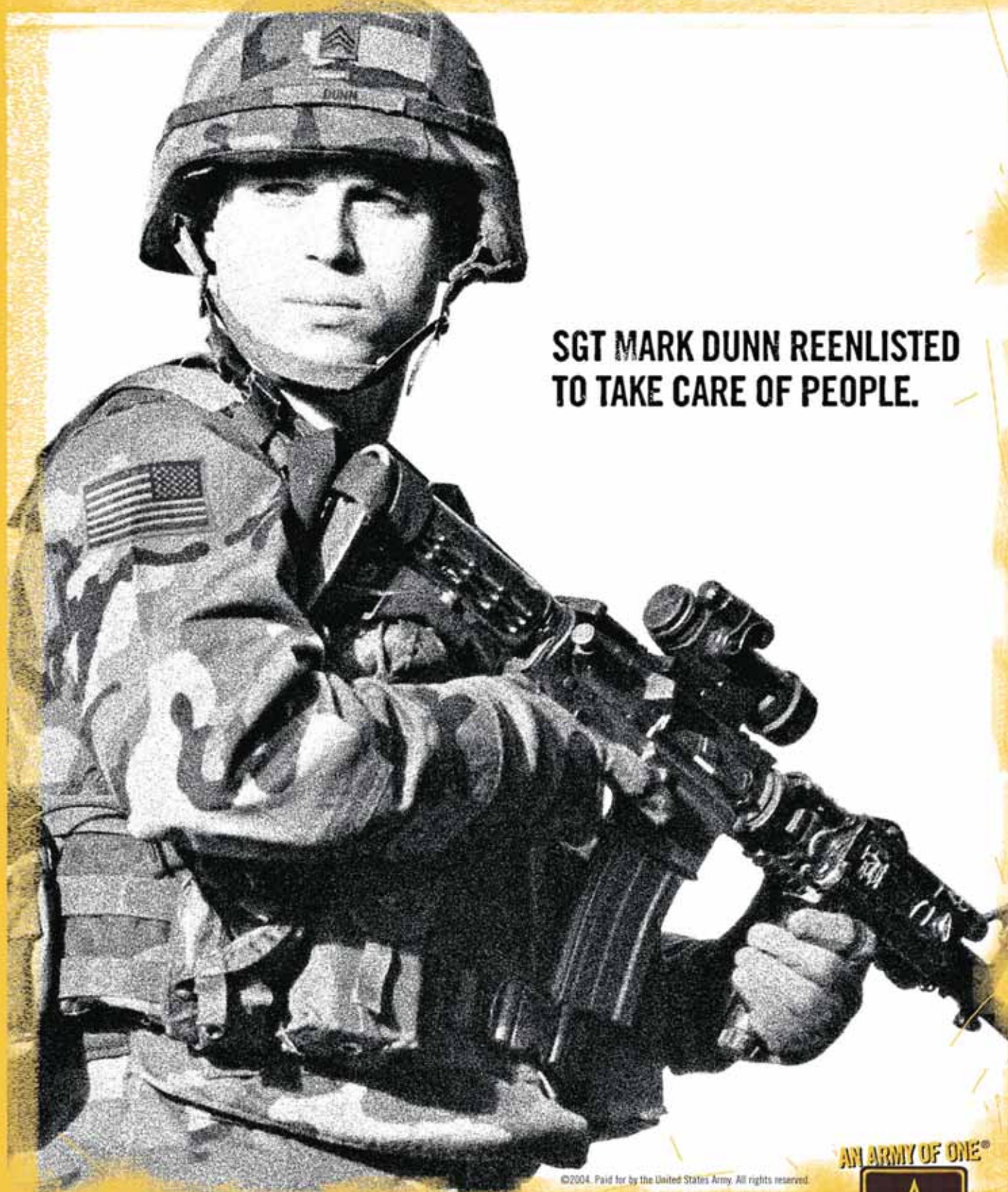
Complete information on all VA programs
is available at www.va.gov.



VETERANS DAY

November 11, 2006





SGT MARK DUNN REENLISTED TO TAKE CARE OF PEOPLE.

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There are thousands of good reasons to reenlist. SGT Dunn did it for his family. With the money he's saving up each year and a monthly pension check to look forward to after retirement, he's continuing to add to his financial security. Now he won't have to worry about affording a mortgage, a college tuition or even saving up for his little girl's wedding.

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